

New Fish Storage Facility Launched in Greater Jonglei

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Ribbon cutting ceremony at the launch of the new cold chain facility in Bor, from left to right: Chair of the Jonglei State Peace commission David Ayang, UNMISS Head of Bor Field Office Deborah Schein, Jonglei State Governor Hon. Phillip Aguer Panyang, UNDP Country Director Kamil Kamaluddeen, Chair of the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission Hon. Chuol Rambang. Credit: UNDP

29 June 2018, Juba — A new facility to improve fish processing and storage was commissioned today in Bor along a critical supply chain benefiting both Fangak Nuer and Jonglei Dinka communities. The facility is funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Development Programme.

“The launch of this plant is a historic moment for the development of Greater Jonglei. The success of this facility lies with those who will be in charge of maintaining and properly utilizing this place. We thank the people of the United Kingdom and UNDP for this support, especially to our youth and our communities. We look forward to building on the success here and to welcoming more development projects like this in the future,” said Jonglei State Governor Hon. Phillip Aguer Panyang, at the commissioning ceremony on Friday.

In addition to the state governor, the handover was attended by the Chair of the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission Hon. Chuol Rambang, Jonglei State Minister of Youth and Sports Hon. Abraham Dut Bol, Chair of the Jonglei State Peace Commission Mr. David Ayang, Mayor of Bor Town Hon. Gai Makor

Leek, UNMISS Head of Bor Field Office Ms. Deborah Schein and representatives of youth organizations and UNDP.

As a result of earlier consultations, the presence of a cold fish storage processing facility was prioritized by the local youth representatives as a way to solidify interdependency between neighboring communities. These communities have historically remained linked economically despite conflict. Creating community-owned mechanisms for peace, as well as access to markets and livelihoods, are critical aspects of UNDP's Peace and Community Cohesion (PaCC) project.

The facility will allow fish product originating in the Toich swamps to be stored at the optimum low temperature, in turn enabling the sale and purchase by suppliers on the local market, before being sorted and transported to consumers in Juba. The facility will improve the pre-existing "relay" model of economic cooperation that benefits both Fangak Nuer and Jonglei Dinka fishermen in the area.

Additionally, expansion of the fish trade among local youth can improve the livelihood and economic conditions of fishermen and fish sellers from both communities and, thereby, strengthen their interdependence.

"This facility will stand as an opportunity for youth to build a foundation for their economic futures and develop lasting and productive livelihoods to benefit not only themselves but their communities at large. The money that will be generated by this facility can grow from a just a seed into a tree with many branches of prosperity. With a vision and unwavering tenacity, the potential of wealth can accumulate into a home-grown Jongei big business, if well managed and well maintained. We hope that youth across Jonglei and beyond will have equal access and shares within this facility," said UNDP Country Director Dr. Kamil Kamaluddeen, at the commissioning of the compound.

The facility consists of a fish storage building, commercial ice machine, solar system, water filtration system, generator, cooling units, fish boxes, and a series of training and tutorial sessions to operate and maintain the equipment.

Construction of the new fish storage "cold chain" plant is part of UNDP's support to developing livelihoods to foster peace and community resilience.

Other community interdependency initiatives have demonstrated the benefits of cementing trade and economic relations as an entry point to overcoming recurrent conflict in key geographic clusters in South Sudan. The PaCC project has witnessed breakthroughs such as the peaceful sharing of dry season water points and grazing pastures among the Lou/Gawaar Nuer and Hol/Nyarweng Dinka in Jonglei, the Aliab, Atout and Chiech Dinka in Lakes state and Messeriya Arabs and Malual Dinka in Sudan and South Sudan, respectively.

Each interdependency economic initiative is coupled with intensive community-level capacity training in transformational leadership, prevention of gender-based violence and conflict resolution. Peace committee members in each of the communities are equipped with essential materials and strategies to help navigate and resolve disputes in their local areas. Evidence shows these grassroots efforts are making an impact. For example, the communities of Mvolo, Rumbek East and Yirol West have agreed to establish a peace market in Wowow (Mvolo) to foster exchange and cohesion. The previously established peace committee of Bor Center will now also be tasked with maintaining dialogue and positive relations so the cold storage facility is freely accessed and benefits all.

"All these developments if sustained will point the way to future strengthening of coping mechanisms, improved community cohesion, improved access to social services, and improved living conditions through enhanced income," said Dr. Kamaluddeen.